

VZCZCXRO0854
PP RUEHQU
DE RUEHPU #1081/01 1711537
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 201537Z JUN 07
FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6340
INFO RUEHZH/HAITI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 1561
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY 1380
RUEHQU/AMCONSUL QUEBEC PRIORITY 0823
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J2 MIAMI FL PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1234

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT AU PRINCE 001081

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/EX AND WHA/CAR
S/CRS
SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
STATE PASS AID FOR LAC/CAR
INR/IAA (BEN-YEHUDA)
WHA/EX PLEASE PASS USOAS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [HA](#)
SUBJECT: POLITICAL PARTIES SELF-REGULATE

REF: PORT AU PRINCE 723

PORT AU PR 00001081 001.2 OF 002

¶1. (U) Summary: The Assembly of Haitian Political Parties (Convention des Partis Politiques Haitiens, or CPPH, in French) on May 31 and June 1 held a colloquium on political parties and construction of a democracy. The main focus of the workshop was a debate over a proposed law governing political party activities and funding. The minister of justice expressed strong support for the law. The debate itself highlighted the difficulty of reaching consensus, with controversy arising over financing of and jurisdiction over political parties. Nevertheless, the willingness of parties to gather together and negotiate is indicative of a new, less contentious approach to Haitian politics. End summary.

¶2. (U) Twelve parties joined together to form the CPPH in September 2005 in a successful effort to ensure adherence to democratic norms and principles in advance of the national elections. Victor Benoit, CPPH president and leader of Fusion, stated that the group is intended to serve as a forum for debate between ideologically different political parties. He stated that the new proposed law will put in place the institutional mechanisms necessary to create a new political culture in Haiti. Fusion spokesperson Micha Gaillard told Poloff that the CPPH is not intended to create a unified political platform among its members, but rather to foster good relations and reduce hostilities between them.

¶3. (U) The CPPH presented at the colloquium a proposed law that builds off the 1987 Haitian constitution, the 2005 electoral decrees, and the 1985 and 1986 decrees on political parties. The comprehensive law deals with: formation, registration and recognition of parties; public, private and campaign financing; budget transparency; campaign activities; dissolution of political parties; and media access. The proposal also puts in place sanctions for violation of these precepts. Gaillard noted to Poloff after the colloquium that the debate was very fruitful and gave parties a chance to voice their concerns. The biggest disagreements concerning the proposed law arose over how public campaign financing should be divided among the parties, and over which institution should have authority over political parties. Some participants preferred that a Permanent Electoral Council have complete jurisdiction, while others preferred

that power rest with the justice ministry. Still others would like to see a combination of the two in order to nullify any political bias on the part of either institution.

(Note: As drafted, the law gives most authority to the Permanent Electoral Council. End note.) Gaillard noted that the CPPH leadership will now deliberate the suggested changes.

¶4. (U) Minister of Justice Rene Magloire, speaking in place of President Preval, gave a lackluster speech about the importance the government attaches to the proposed legislation. He promised that the ministry, which has jurisdiction over political party regulations, welcomes the proposal and is prepared to work with all parties to create a final document that the government will then present to the parliament. (Note: Prime Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis attended the beginning of the workshop but did not give a speech. End note.) Additionally, President of the Senate Joseph Lambert (Lespwa) stated that the parliament takes petitions from political parties very seriously and promised to work diligently on their proposed legislation.

¶5. (U) Most parties were represented by their 2006 presidential candidates. One notable exception was Fanmi Lavalas (FL), represented at the head table by Senator Rudy Herivaux (see reftel for bio information). Senator Herivaux told Poloff that he is now the leader of FL in the absence of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and noted that he had personally led the party back from the precipice and convinced them to field candidates in the 2006 national elections. All other potential leaders are either in prison or in exile, he said. Herivaux insisted that there is no rivalry for leadership of FL, a point that a Lavalas partisan participating in the conversation attempted to discredit by pointing to a whole table of dedicated Lavalasians who felt no loyalty to Herivaux.

PORT AU PR 00001081 002.2 OF 002

¶6. (U) Comment: Haitian political parties are traditionally formed around a single personality with the sole objective of getting him or her into office. The CPPH has as one of its goals the ''normalization'' of Haitian politics, meaning putting an end to the cycle of political crises that have slowed the country's socioeconomic development. The amount of high-level participation in the CPPH colloquium lends credibility to their efforts. The proposed legislation aims to strengthen the structure and organizational discipline of political parties, two traits that are notably absent from most existing parties. However, the law relies heavily on the yet-to-be-formed Permanent Electoral Counsel, highlighting once again the importance of the CEP to Haiti's democratic process.

TIGHE